5: Azevedo--5 D, Z-5 (1951) 1953 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

[SALVADOR]

/8 cont./

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• 115 index cabinets and their registers. I wish finally to mention very
114 especially my informants, whom it is unfortunately impossible to name; I wish to express to them here all my gratitude for their good will and for the wealth of data and of personal experiences that they kindly entrusted to me and that I have utilized for a scientific purpose; I add that none of them can be held responsible for the way in which I have utilized this material.

January, 1952 Thales de Azevedo

[SALVADOR]

/28 cont./

829 * 563 moreover, that, in certain cases, they are applied to persons who actually strive to compensate for their feeling of inferiority by an affected manner of speaking and behavior.

/29/ Color Is a Mere Accident

The expression "black with a white soul" is used as much in Bahia as in the rest of the world, wherever it is believed that a Black, in order to be good, must necessarily possess the qualities of the White. It is most significant that such a way of thinking finds followers even among colored people. The mother, morena, [115] of one of our informants said that "the Black is black inside and out," and that if she were to marry again she would certainly never marry a man as dark as her husband. In a publication in which, 829 * 563 538 [577] 20 years ago, an association of Blacks commemorated the first centenary of its founding, one can read on the first page: "If we examine the archives of the society or if we leaf through its books, we shall see there this contrast: black men having a very high ideal, perfect characters, irreproachable sentiments, and, above all, very noble aspirations."

There are also, fortunately, those who deny the intellectual and moral inferiority of the Black. In an article appended to the statutes of another organization of colored people, it is explained that "what happens is that the Black, because he is poor, lacks the necessary tranquillity to which, for him as for the white man, is owed intellectual progress, the source of comfort and joy. Moreover, always tortured by the injustice that pursues him, he should have become a rebel rather than the efficient collaborator that he is, an element in the continuous ascent and moral and intellectual improvement of the Brazilian population." There is in these judgments, along with a complaint, the refutation of the theory of the innate mental inferiority of the black and the idea that there is a contrast between the dark color of the skin and noble aspirations.

[SALVADOR]

/30 cont./

829 he was a mulatto. His own mother called his attention to the
*563 difference that existed between him and his friends, but those
565 who were of his type and who had money continued to regard themselves as Whites and to be treated as such. An economist, darker than the official we have just quoted, states that the extreme poverty in which he lived during his childhood did not permit him to think of his color. An intellectual of a dark color says that when he was an adolescent he never thought of his type; no experiences previous to this period were associated with an
[572] awareness of his color. The same thing seems to happen among white children when lasting relationships are allowed to be established between them and their companions at school and play, without discrimination as to type. Numerous informants of very dark color report that they still maintain several friendships made at school with finos Whites. Even among the adults there are some who claim not to have ever been conscious of their type. An
• [115] instructor told us that he was never preoccupied with his pigmentation, because he regarded that as having nothing to do with his difficulties or with his professional life. It is clear that statements
[124] of this nature cannot be accepted solely at their face value; they
[123] could, as a matter of fact, be defense reactions against the inquiries of the investigators.

*563 There are nevertheless persons who do not succeed in over-
829 coming the inferiority complex resulting from their "quality."
571 "A look is enough to upset a person of dark color," said a /31/ very black university student. Sometimes when he had been treated as a "Negro" he was irritated and felt humiliated. "But I have succeeded in overcoming this feeling," he adds; "I too am able to treat other "Whites" without antipathy as soon as I see that they are prepared to be pleasant with me." Without doubt there exists "a slight repression" among the Blacks, "but it is never intense and ought to be overcome," states a mulatto lawyer, and he adds that "such a feeling can give birth to a servile attitude"; one of his colleagues, of the same color as he, a very competent and industrious man, does not have the courage to plead cases for himself and continues to be simply the assistant of a white lawyer.